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IN BRIEF

NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASE

Exon-skipping approach shows potential in patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy

Drisapersen, an antisense oligonucleotide that induces exon skipping in the dystrophin gene transcript, improves ambulation in patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD), according to a phase II study. Investigators randomly assigned 53 patients with early-stage DMD to continuous or intermittent drisapersen, or to placebo. After 24 weeks of treatment, the patients who received continuous drisapersen, but not those in the other groups, showed a significant increase in 6-min walk distance.

Original article Voit, T. *et al.* Safety and efficacy of drisapersen for the treatment of Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DEMAND II): an exploratory, randomised, placebo-controlled phase 2 study. *Lancet Neurol.* doi:10.1016/S1474-4422(14)70195-4

NEURAL REPAIR AND REHABILITATION

Tractography can measure axon growth after graft surgery

A case report has described a new protocol for imaging the regeneration of a peripheral nerve. A 25-year-old patient underwent graft surgery after lacerating his peroneal nerve. At 1 month and 13 months after surgery, diffusion-tensor imaging and tractography of the leg clearly revealed axons growing past the original graft and restoring the peroneal nerve fibre. This approach might help identify surgical candidates, and could facilitate postsurgical monitoring.

Original article Simon, N. G. *et al.* Visualizing axon regeneration after peripheral nerve injury with magnetic resonance tractography. *Neurology* doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000000861

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Sports-related concussions might exacerbate the effects of ageing on the brain

Diffusion-weighted imaging has revealed widespread white matter abnormalities in the brains of retired athletes with a history of concussions. Tremblay and colleagues noted that 15 previously concussed participants had lower white matter integrity in frontoparietal and callosal areas than did 15 never-concussed former athletes. Concussion-naïve participants, who were matched for age and education, also demonstrated better episodic and motor memory.

Original article Tremblay, S. *et al.* Diffuse white matter tract abnormalities in clinically normal ageing retired athletes with a history of sports-related concussions. *Brain* doi:10.1093/brain/awu236

DEMYELINATING DISEASE

Mycophenolate mofetil—a viable treatment option for neuromyelitis optica?

A retrospective review combining observational data from three referral centres in Korea has underlined the potential benefits of the immunosuppressant drug mycophenolate mofetil (MMF) in patients with neuromyelitis optica (NMO). In a drug-efficacy analysis involving 58 patients with NMO, MMF treatment was associated with reduced relapse frequency, as well as stabilization or improvement of disability. The authors propose that the drug warrants further investigation in a larger randomized clinical trial.

Original article Huh, S.-Y. *et al.* Mycophenolate mofetil in the treatment of neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder. *JAMA Neurol.* doi:10.1001/jamaneurol.2014.2057